

# *Dateline DHMH*

Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

## *A Message from the Secretary*

This year I have the honor of being the Assistant Campaign Chairperson for the **2001 Maryland Charity Campaign**. This is an extremely important effort; countless non-profit organizations rely on this campaign for funding to carry out programs and services to those in need in our communities.

In 2000, an astonishing \$3.8 million was raised by state employees and retirees. Over \$273,000 was raised by DHMH. This year, we are setting our sights to an even more ambitious level: our statewide goal is \$4 million; the target for DHMH is to top \$287,000.

I often wonder if everyone knows the range of organizations that benefit from the Maryland Charity Campaign. Most of us know there are non-profits to feed the hungry, house the homeless, and help those who are suffering from illnesses or from disabilities. But there are also organizations that work to support the environment, enhance our cultural offerings and help develop our children into better citizens.

This year's theme is "*Creating Caring Communities . . . Together.*" What could be better than to have each DHMH employee be a part of this caring community and help our department and state exceed its goals? With that in mind, I want to challenge everyone at DHMH to take part in this campaign. It does not matter how much you give; every dollar helps. The important thing is to participate.

Please join Lieutenant Governor Kathleen Kennedy Townsend and me at the **kickoff** for the 2001 Maryland Charity Campaign. It will be held in the O'Connor Building lobby on **Wednesday, September 5** beginning at 11 a.m. A chicken barbeque lunch will be available after the festivities have concluded.

I want to thank each of you who helped make the 2000 campaign as successful as it was. Now, I want each DHMH employee to accept my challenge and make the 2001 campaign the best ever. Thank you in advance for a job well done!



## **Eastern Shore Hospital Center Officially Opens**

Governor Parris N. Glendening joined state and local officials at the formal opening of the Eastern Shore Hospital Center (ESHC) in mid-August. The 80-bed facility replaces the former Center, built in 1915 on the banks of the Choptank River. Constructed at a cost of \$22.8 million, the ESHC is a one-story, a 115,000 square-foot structure located in the City of Cambridge.

The new Hospital Center, operated by the Mental Hygiene Administration, is a state-of-the-art treatment center that provides acute and continuing care mental health services to the Eastern Shore counties of Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester. It also offers gero-psychiatric services, and soon will provide forensic services.

The facility was constructed on 22 acres of land donated to the State by the Dorchester County Commissioners. In an effort to be as economical as possible, the Center features a heating system which can run on either natural gas or Number 2 fuel.

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## Eastern Shore Hospital Center

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It is landscaped to provide a therapeutic setting for patients while preserving the rural nature of its environment.

"The Center's programming is designed to offer a variety of therapies, recreation and dining within a 'main street' of activity known as a Treatment Mall," said Dr. Benjamin. "This is a first for Maryland and promises to provide an environment more conducive to the recovery process," he added.

"We are very excited to offer such a unique treatment model to our patients, and are equally proud that the community support continues to be so extensive," said Oscar Morgan, Director of the Mental Hygiene Administration. "Through the continued commitment and generosity of various

Walter Wise, Governor's Office



*Governor Glendening and Mary Kay Noren (with scissors) help to unveil the plaque at Eastern Shore Hospital Center.*

organizations and the hospital's Auxiliary, the facility highlights the Shore's community spirit at its best."

The ESHC's Chief Executive Officer is Mary Kay Noren. It is accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations and certified by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (formerly the Health Care Financing Administration).

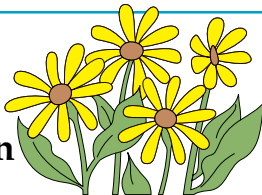
## Announcing the Trainer Certification Program

The Training Services Division is providing an extensive, six-day train-the-trainer program which covers such topics as adult learning theory, needs assessment, training design, presentation skills and training evaluation.

The program is targeted to employees who design and deliver training as part of their jobs and/or positions. In addition to the six days, some work outside the class is required. At every stage of the program, applicants can apply what they are learning either through group activities or through work on a training project, which is one of several requirements for "certification."

The program will be all day on October 19, November 2, 9, 27, December 7 and 14 at a location to be determined based upon the location of the majority of participants. For more information, contact Dr. Nancy Hoffman 410-767-5730 or visit the Training Services Division Web site at [www.dhmf.state.md.us/tsd/](http://www.dhmf.state.md.us/tsd/) to download an application.

## Preston Street Construction



It's almost impossible to visit any of the State Office Buildings on Preston Street and not see the road construction.

This work includes streetscape improvements along the 300 block of West Preston Street between North Eutaw Street and North Howard Street. The work includes the following:

- Replacement of curbing and sidewalks in front of 300 & 301 West Preston Street.
- Removing plantings and installing new flower beds, trees and benches.

- New curbing and grading in the center island with fencing.
- Flagpoles in the center island between 300 & 301 West Preston Street.
- New crosswalk between 300 & 301 West Preston Street including handicapped ramps.
- New street lighting and sidewalk in front of the Fifth Regiment Armory.
- New lighting in front of 201 West Preston Street.
- New planting bed and pavement at corner of Howard & West Preston (opposite Fifth Regiment Armory).

This project, which is expected to last six months, is being conducted by the Department of General Services.

## Office of Oral Health Promotes Oral Cancer Awareness

Governor Glendening has proclaimed September 16-22 as **Maryland Oral Cancer Awareness Week**. Oral cancer is a serious health problem in Maryland and the rest of the nation. To help raise awareness, the DHMH Office of Oral Health has planned a week-long campaign that includes special events, advertisements and free oral cancer screenings.

While oral cancer accounts for just four percent of cancers diagnosed in the United States annually, the survival rate for people with oral cancer is dismally low. Only slightly more than half of those diagnosed are alive five years later. In fact, the overall survival rate for oral cancer has not improved in the past 16 years.

The picture is even grimmer for Maryland, where in recent years, mortality rates have been as much as 15 percent higher than the national rates. Maryland ranks eighth among all the states in mortality rates for oral pharyngeal cancer.

As with other cancers, prevention and early detection are the keys to beating oral cancer. It's no coincidence that 90 percent of oral cancer patients are tobacco users. While smokers are six times more likely than non-smokers to develop oral cancer, it's not just those who light up who increase their risk. Chewing tobacco is linked to cancers of the cheek, gums, and inner surfaces of the lip, and those who use it increase their risk of this cancer by 50 percent.

Tobacco use is the biggest risk factor for oral cancer, but it's not the only one. Alcohol use also increases the risk of the disease. At least 75 percent of all patients with oral cancer consume alcoholic beverages frequently. Sun exposure is another danger. Nearly a third of patients with cancer of the lips have outdoor occupations associated with prolonged exposure to sunlight.

Gender plays a role as well. Men are twice as likely to develop oral cancer, since they are more likely to use tobacco and alcohol. Despite this fact, oral cancer rates for women are rising rapidly due to the increased numbers of women who smoke.

Screening for oral cancer is important, especially if you are a tobacco user. Ask your dentist or doctor to perform a head and neck exam at least once a year. Pay close attention to unusual symptoms in the mouth, especially any of the following:

- A sore in the mouth that does not heal (most common symptom);
- A lump or thickening in the cheek;
- A white or red patch on the gums, tongue, tonsil or lining of the mouth;
- A sore throat or a feeling that something is caught in the throat;
- Difficulty chewing or swallowing;
- Numbness of the tongue or other areas of the mouth;
- Swelling of the jaw that causes dentures to fit poorly or become uncomfortable; and
- A lump or mass in the neck.

To reduce your risk of oral cancer, do not use smoking or

chewing tobacco. If you already use tobacco products, see your doctor about quitting. Don't abuse alcohol, and minimize your exposure to sunlight by wearing sunscreen and protective clothing whenever you are outdoors.

For a list of sites for free oral cancer screenings during Oral Cancer Awareness Week, call the Office of Oral Health at 410-767-6742.

***Editor's Note:** Thanks to Tara Snyder, Community Health Educator in the Office of Health Promotion, Education and Tobacco Prevention, for writing this article.*

## Congratulations to . . .

**Jenny Babcock and Tricia Roddy**, who have joined DHMH in the Office of the Deputy Secretary for Health Care Services. Jenny most recently worked in health care consulting and policy analysis for the Lewin Group in Falls Church, Virginia. Tricia comes to DHMH from Cap Gemini Ernst & Young, where her work involved developing strategies and development plans for clients in the health care industry, including insurers, providers and pharmaceutical companies.

**Staff at the Division of Cardiovascular Health and Nutrition**, who delivered a poster presentation at the first National CDC Prevention Conference on Heart Disease and Stroke in Atlanta in late August. The session focused on a five-prong communications strategy using non-traditional partnerships and minimal funding.

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## ***Congratulations to:***

*Continued*

**The Staff at Brandenburg Center in Cumberland**, which has been awarded national accreditation by The Council for a two-year period. The Council is a national, private organization sponsored by 11 advocacy and professional groups. The Brandenburg Center, a part of the Development Disabilities Administration, has been accredited since 1985.



*Ross Brechner*

**Dr. Ross Brechner**, who joins DHMH as the State Epidemiologist. Dr. Brechner most recently served as the Chief of the

Office of Epidemiology and Biostatistics for the Arizona Department of Health Services. He also served for two years with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Epidemic Intelligence Service office.

**Dr. Jafar Razeq** of the Laboratories Administration and **Dr. Jeffrey C. Roche** of the Family Health Administration, who were among the authors of the article, "Invasive Meningococcal Disease in Adolescents and Young Teens," published in the August 8 edition of the *Journal of the American Medical Association*. The article focuses on those aged 15-24 in Maryland in the 1990s.

## **Upcoming events**

Monday, September 17 — **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Administration (ADAA) Open House and Treatment Program Showcase**, 1:00 - 3:30 p.m., ADAA offices on the Spring Grove Hospital Center Campus at 55 Wade Avenue in Catonsville. Phone 410-402-8600 for more information.

Thursday, September 20 — **Workshop: Elder Law Issues: Asset Management, Health Care Decision Making, and Paying for Long-Term Care**, University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for six Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

Friday, September 28 — **Workshop: Treating Addictions in Task Groups**, University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for six Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

Saturday, September 29 — **Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk**. Anne Arundel, Cecil, Harford and Howard counties. Call 410-561-9099 for more information.

Tuesday, October 2 — **Workshop: Healing into Death: The Role of Mindfulness in Palliative Care**, University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. \$115, approved for six Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

Thursday, October 4 — **Conference: Improving Acute Hospital Care for People with Dementia**, 8:00 a.m. - Noon, University of Maryland Medical Center Shock Trauma Auditorium. Phone 410-561-9099 or 410-706-4327 for more information.

Saturday, October 6 — Carroll County **Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk**. Call 410-561-9099 for more information.

Thursday, October 11 — **Fourth Annual Fall Fest and Gong Show**, 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., O'Connor Building Lobby. Co-sponsored by the Mental Hygiene Administration. Contact Jean Smith at 410-402-7517 for more information.

Sunday, October 14 — Baltimore City and County **Alzheimer's Association Memory Walk**. Call 410-561-9099 for more information.

Tuesday, October 23 — **Workshop: Addictions Self-Help Programs: Complements to Clinical Practice With Clients**, University of Maryland School of Social Work; 8:30 a.m. - 4:15 p.m. \$125, approved for six Category I continuing education credits. Phone 410-706-1839 for more information.

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## Health Care Commission Releases Nursing Home Guide

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) in August released its first state-sponsored **Nursing Home Performance Evaluation Guide**.

This Guide offers a detailed look at over 200 comprehensive care nursing facilities and continuing care retirement communities. The report enables consumers to review information on facility and resident characteristics, quality indicators and any deficiencies observed during the state inspection of the nursing home.

Available on the Internet at [www.mhcc.state.md.us](http://www.mhcc.state.md.us), the Guide provides general information on patient rights, how to pay for nursing home care, and what to look for when visiting a nursing home. Nursing home data may be accessed by name or geographical area, including county and zip code.

The Guide groups nursing homes into three groups: the top 20 percent of nursing homes; the bottom 10 percent of nursing homes; and all others for each of



27 Quality Indicators (QIs) that are used to grade performance. The QIs cover events in clinical, psychosocial, medication-prescribing and functional categories.

Barbara McLean, Interim Executive Director for MHCC, stressed that poor performance on the QIs does not necessarily mean poor quality care.

"The QIs are a tool that is indicative of performance that should prompt an interested consumer to ask further questions about a nursing home," Ms. McLean said.

*Dr. Benjamin discusses the Nursing Home Guide with a reporter from WBAL television.*

"It is important to look at the QIs in the context of the population served. For example, if a nursing home specializes in treating Alzheimer's patients, disruptive behavioral problems may be more understandable even though the care is excellent. We have tried to adjust for these resident differences where we could. The QIs are currently the best tool we have to uniformly look at quality across nursing homes," she added.

The Guide will be updated at least every six months. The Commission has annually produced a report comparing the quality of care provided by commercial health maintenance organizations in the State for the past five years.

Those who do not have access to the Internet can contact the Commission to request a copy of the report at 410-764-3460, toll free at 1-877-245-1762, or TDD at 1-800-735-2258.

For further information call 410-764-3460.

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## Upcoming events *Continued*

Tuesday and Wednesday, October 23 - 24 — **Blood Drive**, 9:30 a.m. - 2:15 p.m. O'Connor Building lobby. Contact Jeannine Timmons at 410-767-6403 to sign up or for more information. Incentives are awarded for participation in this drive.

Thursday and Friday, October 25 - 26 — **Conference: 4th Annual 2001 Maryland Rural Summit**, Rocky Gap, Maryland. Sponsored by the DHMH Office of Primary Care - Rural Health, the Maryland Rural Health Association and the FORVM for Rural Maryland. Phone 410-767-5942 for more information.

## Save Money With U.S. Savings Bonds!



Series EE and I Bonds through payroll deduction are again being offered this year to State employees. Last year many State employees elected to begin or increase their allotments in the U.S. Savings Bonds Payroll Savings Program.

Here are some great reasons to think about saving money with U.S. Savings Bonds.

**Competitive** - U.S. Savings Bonds earn competitive rates of return compared to other forms of saving. Interest on Savings Bonds accrues monthly and compounds semiannually.

**Safe** - Savings Bonds are backed by the full faith and credit of the United States. Your Savings Bonds are registered, so the Treasury can replace them if they're lost, mutilated, or stolen.

**Affordable** - For as little as \$25, you can start saving money with U.S. Savings Bonds. From there, you can purchase as much as \$15,000 worth of Series EE Bonds and \$30,000 of I Bonds each year.

**Convenient** - Buy Savings Bonds on-line, or where you work, bank, or through the EasySaver Plan.

**Accessible** - Savings Bonds are easily redeemable, so if you need your money unexpectedly, it's right there for you. The longer you let your bonds grow, the more you benefit, yet you can redeem them any time after six months.

**Tax Benefits** - The interest earned on Savings Bonds is exempt from all State and local income taxes. Federal income taxes are deferred until the bonds reach final maturity, or you redeem them, whichever is first. If you qualify, using Savings Bonds to pay for qualified higher education expenses may allow you to exclude your earnings from federal income taxes as well.

The Savings Bond Payroll Deduction Application form and instructions can be found on the Central Payroll Bureau's Web page at: <http://compnet.comp.state.md.us/cpb/employees/savingsbond/default.asp>. If you

do not have access to the Web or have additional questions about completing your bond application or the deduction process, please contact Cathy Macco, from Central Payroll, at 410-260-6328.

If you have general questions concerning Savings Bonds you may visit the Savings Bonds Online Guide at [www.savingsbonds.gov](http://www.savingsbonds.gov) or contact Rick Griener, Area Representative for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, Savings Bond Unit at 410-569-2889.

The completed application may be forwarded to:  
Central Payroll Bureau  
P.O. Box 2396  
Annapolis, MD 21404-2396



STATE OF MARYLAND

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